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| **World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-19) Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, 28 October – 22 November 2019** |  |
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| PLENARY MEETING | **Revision 1 to Document 184-E** |
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| Australia/Brazil (Federative Republic of)/Cameroon (Republic of)/Canada/Colombia (Republic of)/Cuba/Spain/United States of America/Finland/France/Mexico/New Zealand/Pakistan (Islamic Republic of)/Netherlands (Kingdom of the)/Portugal/United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland/Sweden/Switzerland (Confederation of) | |
| PROPOSALS FOR THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE | |
| DECLARATION ON PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY, EQUITY AND PARITY IN THE ITU RADIOCOMMUNICATION SECTOR | |
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Background

The United Nations has 17 Sustainable Development Goals and number 5 is Gender Equality. Yet despite the focus of the United Nations, as recently as 2015, the WRC only had 17% of total attendees who were women. In addition, women only held 14% of leadership roles at the Conference and in 8% in the Study Group process (Cycle 2012-2015). At WRC-19, the participation of women is still at only 18%. In response, we have formed the Network of Women (NOW) at WRC to help enable and develop women leaders in the Radiocommunications Sector  - our focus is on networking, knowledge sharing and mentoring.  The goal of NOW is to ensure that all meetings of the ITU-R reflect gender equality both in participation and leadership.

In order to advance these important goals at the ITU, we would like to propose a Draft Declaration of the WRC to address this gender parity in WRC events and ITU-R meetings. We are looking to raise awareness to the attending women of the opportunities and activities available to enable a faster and greater understanding of the WRC process in order to enable greater participation and advancement. Such Declaration would indicate to the world and the participants of the WRC the importance of gender equality to the countries that participate at WRC an to the ITU-R.

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Draft Declaration on Promoting Gender Equality, Equity and Parity in the ITU Radiocommunication Sector

The World Radiocommunication Conference which took place (Sharm El Sheikh, 2019) on 28 October 2019 to 22 November 2019 adopt the following Declaration,

recognizing

*a)* that while radiocommunication plays an important role in globalization and the effective development of information and communication technologies (ICT), statistically very few women participate in international radiocommunications processes;

*b)* that the work of ITU Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R) can be advanced most effectively through the active inclusion and participation of women;

*c)* that there is a need to ensure that women participate actively and meaningfully in all ITU-R activities;

*d)* that the Radiocommunication Bureau (BR) has established the ITU Network of Women launched at the 2016 World Radiocommunication Seminar, which is dedicated to promoting women in radiocommunications, telecommunications/ICTs and related fields;

*e)* that ITU has adopted a Gender Equality and Mainstreaming (GEM) Policy, with the aim of becoming a model organization for gender equality that leverages the power of telecommunications/ICTs to empower both women and men;

*f)* the progress made by ITU in raising awareness on gender issues, specifically over the last decade, in increasing women’s participation in and contribution to international forums, in studies, projects and training, and in the establishment of an internal Gender Task Force, as well as the successful establishment by ITU of an international "Girls in ICT" day to be held every year on the fourth Thursday of April;

*g)* Resolution 70 (Rev. Dubai 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference, on gender mainstreaming in ITU and promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women through ICTs;

*h)* Resolution 48 (Rev. Dubai, 2018) of the Plenipotentiary Conference on human resources management and development and in particular its Annex 2 “Facilitating the recruitment of women at ITU”;

*i)* the United Nations Secretary-General’s System-wide Strategy on Gender Parity;

*j)* Resolution 55 (Rev. Buenos Aires, 2017) of the World Telecommunication Development Conference, which encourages mainstreaming a gender perspective for an inclusive and egalitarian information society;

*k)* Resolution 55 (Rev. Hammamet, 2016) of the of the World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly, which encourages mainstreaming a gender perspective in the activities of the ITU Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T);

*l)* that the ITU, in its strategic plan, includes gender issues with a view to debating and exchanging ideas to define, throughout the organization, a concrete action plan with deadlines and goals;

*m)* the EQUALS Global Partnership, of which ITU is a founding member, and which is made up of other United Nations agencies, governments, the private sector, academia and civil society organizations, and which aims to reduce the gender digital divide in the world;

*n)* the recommendation in the 2016 United Nations Joint Inspection Unit report that the “Secretary-General present to the Council for endorsement at its 2017 session an action plan to complement the Gender Equality and Mainstreaming Policy, with specific targets, indicative timelines and monitoring measures to improve gender balance, especially at senior management levels, within each component of the Union, and report annually to the Council on its implementation”,

bearing in mind

*a)* that a fundamental principle of the United Nations Charter adopted by world leaders in 1945 is “equal rights of men and women”;

*b)* United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Resolution E/2012/L.8, on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, which welcomed the development of the UN System-Wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNSWAP 2.0), and the 60th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (March, 2016), which stressed the need to ensure women’s full, equal and effective participation in all fields, and leadership at all levels of decision-making in the public and private sectors, and public, social, economic and political life;

*c)* the United Nations HeForShe initiative (2014) to involve men and boys in the promotion of gender equality;

*d)* that society as a whole, particularly in the context of the information and knowledge society, will benefit from equal participation of women and men in policy-making and decision-making and from equal access to communication services for both women and men;

*e)* that the outcome document of the overall review of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) acknowledged that a gender digital divide exists, called for immediate measures to achieve gender equality in Internet users by 2020, especially by significantly enhancing women's and girls' education and participation in ICTs, as users, content creators, employees, entrepreneurs, innovators and leaders, and reaffirmed a commitment to ensure women’s full participation in decision-making processes related to ICTs;

*f)* that women continue to be under-represented in the fields of engineering, particularly those fields related to the development of information and communication technology, both in academia and in the professional ranks;

*g)* that enhancing women’s and girls’ education and their participation in ICTs also contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 5: Achieve gender equity and empower all women and girls;

*h)* the 2013 report of the Working Group on Broadband and Gender of the Broadband Commission for Sustainable Development: Doubling Digital Opportunities – Enhancing the inclusion of women and girls in the information society,

declares

1 that ITU-R continue its efforts to ensure that all its policies, work programmes, information dissemination activities, publications, study groups, seminars, courses, assemblies and conferences reflect the commitment to gender equality, and promote gender balance:

i) for posts, including those at the Professional and higher levels in BR, in the selection of chairmen, vice-chairmen and rapporteurs of the ITU-R study groups, including CPM, and of RAG;

ii) that high priority be accorded to gender mainstreaming in the management, staffing and operation of ITU-R;

iii) that it is critical for Member States and sector members to advance gender equality, parity and equity in their participation in the domestic and international ITU-R process;

iv) that it is necessary for the Director of the Radiocommunication Bureau take steps to continue implementing the ITU GEM Policy, including, supporting the implementation of recommendations from the Joint Inspection Unit relevant to gender mainstreaming, supporting the Gender Focal Points for ITU-R, and encouraging BR staff to undertake relevant training; to continue the integration of a gender perspective in the work of the BR in accordance with the principles already applied in ITU; and to conduct and publish an annual review on progress made in the Sector in advancing gender mainstreaming, including by collecting and reviewing statistics on ITU-R activities by gender, and to share findings with the next world radiocommunications conference;

v) that Member States should encourage and support the participation of women in all aspects of ITU-R activities and support an increase in the number of women in ITU-R leadership positions by:

a) encouraging membership to include women on their delegations, by, inter alia, including in all circulation letters the statement, “The membership is encouraged to include women on their delegations whenever possible”;

b) making the selection of women for BR positions at the Professional and higher levels a top priority;

vi) that the Director of the Radiocommunications Bureau and Member States should support the ongoing work of Network of Women to ensure that all women have an opportunity to develop as ITU-R leaders by serving as rapporteurs or associate rapporteurs;

vii) that the ITU-R should post on a public-facing Network of Women web portal current information on the number of women attending Sector events, including administration or Sector Member affiliation and study group distribution, and identify the study groups in which women hold leadership positions;

viii) that the ITU-R should join the ITU Secretary-General in participating in the Planet 50/50 initiative sponsored by UN Women to tackle invisible gender bias as a Geneva Gender Champion on behalf of ITU-R;

ix) that Member States should submit candidatures for chairman/vice-chairman posts in order to support the active involvement of women as well as men in radiocommunications groups and activities and in their own administrations and delegations;

x) that Member States should to actively support and participate in the work of the Bureau, to actively participate in the Network of Women, and to promote the use of ICTs for the economic and social empowerment of women and girls;

xi) that Member State should consider and adopt a Resolution at the 2023 Radiocommunication Assembly on gender equality, parity and equality in the ITU-R,

further declares

1 that encouraging the adoption of proven measures to increase the global number of women pursuing academic degrees at all levels in STEM fields, particularly those related to the information and communication technologies should be a priority of the ITU Member States and Sector Members;

2 that ITU Member States should urgently undertake active measures to increase the number of girls receiving primary and secondary education in mathematics and science that is sufficient to prepare them to pursue undergraduate degrees in STEM fields, particularly in electrical engineering and computer science, which are critical for the development of information and communication technology;

3 that Member States and Sector Member should dramatically increase the number of scholarships and fellowships provided to women pursuing academic degrees at all levels in STEM fields, particularly in electrical engineering and computer science;

4 that Member States and Sector Members should to dramatically increase the number of internships and summer jobs available for women pursuing academic degrees in fields related to the development of information and communication technologies;

5 that the Member States, Sector Members and the Radiocommunication Bureau should encourage and actively support ICT education for girls and women, and support all measures that will help prepare them for a professional career in ICT standardization.

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